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II.—*Conditional Sentences in the Greek Tragedians.*

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THE object of this paper is to present a few notes upon the use of conditional sentences as found in the Greek tragedians. The scope of the investigation has included not only those sentences which have regularly expressed protases and apodoses, but also the cognate relative sentences, conditional participles, the *quasi*-conditional forms known as potential optatives and indicatives, and other kindred grammatical phenomena. As might be expected, after the brilliant labors of two of our foremost Hellenists in this field, not much that is new has been gleaned, but some of the facts noted may not be without value. It is but a few months since an English scholar of some reputation made a clever attack, in a learned periodical,<sup>1</sup> upon one of the most generally accepted principles in this department of syntax; but when the whole body of usage upon a given point has been collected and tabulated, further cavil becomes impossible.

## I.

THE STYLE OF THE THREE TRAGEDIANS AS ILLUSTRATED  
BY THEIR COMPARATIVE FONDNESS FOR CONDITIONAL  
FORMS OF EXPRESSION.

The familiar fact that the style of Aeschylus is simple and straightforward, so far as the movement of his thought is concerned, while that of Sophocles is more involved and complicated, is well illustrated in their use of conditional forms of expression. The seven plays of Sophocles contain almost three times as many conditionals as the seven plays of

<sup>1</sup> See Bayfield, on Conditional Sentences, *Class. Rev.*, May, 1890.

Aeschylus; while Euripides<sup>1</sup> occupies a middle ground between the two, the difference being therefore an individual trait, and not merely a matter of chronological or historical development. Making the comparison more exact, we find that in Sophocles there are, on an average, 103 hypothetical expressions to every 1000 lines of text, while in Euripides there are 70, and in Aeschylus but 50. This difference is so marked that it may fairly be called a feature in the style of the respective writers, and may therefore have some slight value as evidence bearing upon the disputed authorship of the *Rhesus*. In this play the number of conditional expressions is very small; far smaller than in any play of Sophocles, slightly smaller than in any play of Euripides, though Euripides himself shows a wide variation in this respect in his different plays. Aeschylus is the only tragedian who uses these constructions as sparingly as the author of the *Rhesus*. If all the extant tragedies should be arranged in order, in accordance with the number of conditionals in each 1000 lines of text, the *Rhesus* would stand almost at the very bottom, above only the *Persae* and the *Septem* of Aeschylus, which contain 28 and 34 respectively, while the *Rhesus* contains 46. Next in order comes the *Troades* of Euripides, with 48, while the highest among the plays of Aeschylus is the *Suppliants* with 58. The *Heracleidae* with 98 stands highest in the list of Euripides, while the plays of Sophocles range from 90 in the *Trachiniae* to 120 in the *Oedipus Tyrannus*, the latter standing highest of all the plays, and clearly showing its elaborate and subtle character by the fact that conditional expressions are more than four times as frequent as in the *Persae*, which stands lowest in the list. It therefore appears that if we judge by this feature of style alone, the *Rhesus* cannot be an early work of Sophocles (unless, indeed, we suppose a complete change in the habit of the latter, between his lost earlier works and his later dramas); it might have been written by Euripides; but it shows the closest affinity with the style of Aeschylus. Some minor

<sup>1</sup> This fact is worth noting, as it has often been asserted that Euripides uses conditional sentences more frequently than Sophocles.

peculiarities,<sup>1</sup> however, regarding the kind of conditions preferred, indicate the hand of Euripides more strongly than that of Aeschylus.

## II.

### FORMS OF CONDITION MOST FREQUENTLY USED.

The *quasi*-conditional expression known as the potential optative is by far the most frequent of all the different forms noted, no less than 763 cases being found in the extant tragedies. Of real conditional sentences the most frequent is the simple condition with *ἐἰ* and the Indicative mood, next to which comes the Subjunctive introduced by a relative with *ἄν*. The three tragedians exhibit no marked difference of usage in this respect, except that Aeschylus shows more fondness for the potential optative than either of his rivals, while in Euripides the subjunctive with *ἐάν*, which is comparatively rare in Aeschylus and Sophocles, begins to hold a prominent place, — a fact which coincides with the observation so often made that the younger tragedian shows a considerable degree of approximation to the language of ordinary prose.

<sup>1</sup> Particularly the preference for *ἐάν* with the Subj. rather than *ἐἰ* with the Fut. Ind., see Tables I and II. A minute but striking indication in the same direction is noticed below, at the close of this paper.

TABLE I.  
*Number of Cases of the Ordinary Conditional Forms.*

	RHESUS, 996 vv.		AESCHYLUS, 8023 vv.		SOPHOCLES, 10,339 vv.		EURIPIDES, 25,040 vv.		TOTAL, 44,398 vv.	
	Cases.	Cases per 1000 vv.	Cases.	Cases per 1000 vv.	Cases.	Cases per 1000 vv.	Cases.	Cases per 1000 vv.	Cases.	Cases per 1000 vv.
Pot. Opt. . . . .	15	15.2	122	15.2	209	20.	417	16.6	763	17.2
Simple with εἰ <sup>1</sup> . . . .	7	9.	72	9.	219	22.	296	12.	594	13.4
Rel. and ἄν with Subj. .	7	5.7	46	5.7	133	13.3	222	9.	408	9.2
ἔάνν with Subj. . . . .	6	1.5	12	1.5	62	6.2	218	8.7	298	6.7
Cond. Participles . . .	0	5.5	44	5.5	75	7.5	128	5.	247	5.6
εἰ with Fut. Ind. <sup>1</sup> . . .	3	2.9	23	2.9	74	7.4	131	5.2	231	5.2
εἰ with Opt. . . . .	1	4.	31	4.	54	5.4	83	3.3	169	3.8
Contrary to fact . . . .	2	1.4	11	1.4	46	4.6	94	3.7	153	3.4
Pot. Indic. . . . .	2	1.2	10	1.2	39	3.9	39	1.6	90	2.
Miscellaneous . . . . .	3	3.4	27	3.4	128	12.8	115	4.6	273	6.1
Total . . . . .	46	49.8	398	49.8	1039	103.1	1743	69.7	3226	72.6

<sup>1</sup> Separated for convenience.

TABLE II.

*Percentages of the Four Most Frequent Forms.*

	Aeschylus.	Sophocles.	Euripides.	Total.
Pot. Opt. . . . .	.30	.20	.24	.236
Simple with <i>εἰ</i> . . .	.18	.215	.17	.184
Rel. and <i>ἄν</i> with Subj.	.115	.13	.13	.126
<i>εἰάν</i> with Subj. . . .	.11	.06	.12	.09

## III.

## REMARKS ON SOME OF THE DIFFERENT FORMS.

1. *Potential Optatives.*

A few cases of the omission of *ἄν* with the potential optative are found in the tragedians. Most of these occur after relative expressions like *οὐκ ἔστιν ὅστις, οὐκ ἔστιν ὅπως*, and form a class by themselves. But it is noticeable that in spite of the efforts of Wecklein and many other critics, who have emended or explained many of the MS. readings, there yet remain a few other cases, not introduced by these relative expressions, when the *ἄν* is omitted. In Ag. 1002 <sup>1</sup> *ἀπειθείης δ' ἴσως*, the *ἄν* may perhaps be supplied from the previous clause, though Wecklein forces the interpretation by making these words part of the protasis *εἰ πείθοιο*. In Ag. 1117, *νεογνὸς ἀνθρώπων μάθοι* is retained by Kirchhoff, but Wecklein reads *ἄν αἰὼν* for *ἀνθρώπων*. In Cho. 579, Wecklein avoids the difficulty by first correcting the text so as to secure the presence of *ἄν* in 577, and then asserts that this former *ἄν* in the strophe is still felt two lines below in the antistrophe; certainly a difficult explanation. In Ant. 605, *τίς ἀνδρῶν ὑπερβασία κατάσχοι* is a clear case of the omission of *ἄν*, though even here Wecklein emends and inserts the

<sup>1</sup> Aeschylus is quoted by Kirchhoff's lines, Sophocles by Schneidewin-Nauck's, Euripides by Nauck's.

missing word. Hipp. 1186, *θάσσον ἢ λέγοι τις*, and Androm. 929, *ὥς εἴποι τις*, are two more clear cases which have not yet been satisfactorily corrected. From these six instances, without taking account of many others which are found in the MSS., but which have been emended with the general consent of scholars, it would appear that Wecklein is not fully justified in his assertion, quite recently<sup>1</sup> reiterated, that this irregularity does not exist in the Attic poets. It certainly does exist, though we are warranted in saying, with Goodwin,<sup>2</sup> that the few cases found are to be regarded as mere anomalies.

## 2. *Conditions with εἰ and the Future Indicative.*

Little need be said in regard to the ordinary conditions with *εἰ* and the indicative, except that Aeschylus and Sophocles show a marked preference for this form of protasis, which is also the favorite form with Pindar.<sup>3</sup> In Euripides it is not so commonly found as in either of the other two tragedians. But future conditions with *εἰ* are of special interest on account of the well-known doctrine of Professor Gildersleeve, apparently accepted in the new edition of Goodwin's *Moods and Tenses*,<sup>4</sup> that this form carries with it a solemn or threatening sense,<sup>5</sup> and is therefore used with great frequency by the tragedians. The statistics of this usage here given are the result of independent investigation, and are produced, not with the purpose of opposing Gildersleeve's conclusion, but of defining the extent of its application. There are in the extant tragedies 231 protases of this sort. Of these 73 really express present intention, and are equivalent to the corresponding form of *μέλλω* with the infinitive. Fifty-six others seem to be in no respect different in meaning from ordinary future conditions with *εἰάν* and the subjunctive. Of the 102 which remain, 44 are distinctly minatory, while 58

<sup>1</sup> See Berlin. Phil. Woch., 1891, 22, 677.

<sup>2</sup> *Moods and Tenses*, p. 81.

<sup>3</sup> Gildersleeve, *Pindaric Syntax*, Am. Jour. of Phil. Vol. III, No. 12.

<sup>4</sup> See p. 165 of the new edition.

<sup>5</sup> Trans. Am. Phil. Assoc. Vol. VII, 1876.

others express at least an undesirable alternative. If, then, we leave out of view those which are equal to μέλλω with the infinitive, the ratio between those which are minatory or unfavorable and those which cannot be so interpreted is 102 to 56. This would seem to go far toward proving that the form in question was consciously used by the tragedians as appropriate for carrying the solemn tone referred to. But it must be admitted that frequently, on the contrary, the very same form was used for a possibility which was ardently hoped for or desired. Seventeen such cases have been noted, of which one is from Aeschylus, five from Sophocles, and eleven from Euripides. The list is as follows: Cho. 756, O. T. 844, Phil. 353, O. K. 628, 1340, Trach. 1246, Androm. 970, El. (Euripides) 263, Hipp. 501, Iph. Aul. 654, Iph. Taur. 999, Ion 649, 750, Cyc. 475, Or. 1102, 1212, Phoen. 725. And furthermore the gloomy or threatening possibility is often expressed by εἰν with the subjunctive, as in Ag. 1397, Prom. 1035, O. K. 814, Ant. 87, Phil. 817, 1298, 1299, Bacch. 52, 823, Hel. 480, 1176. The force of the induction is thus weakened from both sides. In short, it seems clear that this use of the future with εἰ can at best be nothing more than an ill-defined and unconscious tendency, which is not followed with sufficient regularity, either upon the positive or negative side, to amount to a rule or even a fixed habit.

TABLE III.

*Ei with the Future Indicative.*

	Aeschylus.	Sophocles.	Euripides.	Total.
Minatory . . . . .	6	19	19	44
Unfavorable . . . . .	5	21	32	58
Present Intention . . .	8	24	41	73
Ordinary . . . . .	4	10	42	56
Total . . . . .	23	74	134	231



The cases are as follows: *Minatory*, Aeschylus, Sup. 444, 455, 870, Pr. 316, Per. 367, Sept. 178. Sophocles, O. T. 233, 234, 1166, Ant. 93, 307, 324, 414, Phil. 376, Ajax 313, 1155, 1256, 1308, 1314, O. C. 837, El. 379, 430, 465, 470, 1004. Euripides, Alc. 704, Androm. 314, 708, Bacch. 239, 975; Hec. 272, 373, 652, 974, Hipp. 327, 1088, Iph. A. 972, Ion 168, Med. 352, Orest. 272, 1533, Tro. 735, Phoen. 19, 885. — *Unfavorable*, Aeschylus, Sup. 458, 891, Ag. 1012, Cho. 558, Eum. 587. Sophocles, O. T. 620, 846, 889, 890, 891, 902, Ant. 60, 229, 660, Phil. 66, 68, 75, 1199, 1394, O. C. 827, 1206, El. 501, 1369, Trach. 666, 712, 719. Euripides, Alc. 385, Androm. 61, 254, 925, Hec. 347, 863, 1233, Hel. 919, El. 584, 686, 1093, Her. 166, 243, 418, 495, 506, H. F. 1074, 1412, Sup. 605, 711, Hipp. 305, Iph. T. 690, 975, 986, Ion 847, Med. 381, 931, Orest. 158, 304, Rhes. 113, 600, Phoen. 1621. — *Present Intention*, Aeschylus, Sept. 99, 601, Ag. 194, 1203, 1292, Cho. 174, 265, Eum. 487. Sophocles, O. T. 54, 522, 586, 667, 702, Ant. 462, 485, Phil. 988, Ajax 511, 1241, 1242, 1244, 1245, 1248, 1249, O. C. 1181, El. 244, 377, 582, 834, 1210, Trach. 305, 732, 1113. Euripides, Alc. 700, 733, Androm. 378, 409, 1282, Bacch. 786, Hec. 802, Hel. 1051, 1155, 1631, El. 49, Her. 150, 197, 444, 764, H. F. 210, Sup. 521, 540, 543, 783, Hipp. 461, 481, Iph. A. 103, 817, 941, 947, 995, 1415, Iph. T. 1022, 1034, Ion 254, 1077, Med. 78, 512, 577, 1249, 1298, Orest. 239, 240, 1106, Tro. 890. — *Ordinary*, Aeschylus, Sup. 494, Cho. 558, 664, 756. Sophocles, O. T. 844, Ant. 90, 234, Phil. 353, O. C. 628, 648, 1340, 1435, El. 1044, Trach. 1246. Euripides, Androm. 970, Bacch. 1261, Hel. 1011, El. 263, Her. 593, 739, Sup. 557, Hipp. 501, 697, 938, 976, Iph. A. 296, 654, 1190, 1262, 1268, Iph. T. 999, 1412, Ion 375, 445, 648, 669, 750, 1024, Cyc. 199, 308, 475, Med. 346, 1109, Orest. 509, 511, 566, 599, 803, 935, 940, 1102, 1212, Rhes. 169, Tro. 661, Phoen. 244, 725.

In Aeschylus, Paley's text is sometimes followed.

### 3. *Subjunctive Conditions introduced by εἰ, or a Relative without ἄν.*

One of the most interesting features in the tragic style is the frequent omission of ἄν before the subjunctive mood, leaving a simple εἰ, or a relative alone, to introduce a future or general condition. It is perhaps not generally recognized how important an irregularity this is, as the last edition of the Moods and Tenses speaks of it as "sometimes occurring" in "a few cases." But there are in the extant tragedies no less than 64 cases of this peculiarity, 15 of which are quoted by Goodwin.<sup>1</sup> It is most frequent in Sophocles, who gives us 33 cases, while Euripides, in almost three times as many tragedies, shows but 19 cases. Of this total of 64 cases, 20 are ordinary future conditions, but the remaining 44, or

<sup>1</sup> Moods and Tenses, pp. 167, 173, 208.

more than two-thirds of the whole, are generic. This fact brings forcibly to mind the familiar Homeric custom of omitting *ἄν* in generic conditions, and seems to indicate that the tragic usage is a survival from the epic syntax. In the tragedians the generic use is particularly prominent in cases where a relative rather than *εἰ* introduces the subjunctive, 20 cases of which occur in Sophocles alone. Indeed, so far as Sophocles is concerned, it might almost be said that in present general conditions he uses the subjunctive introduced by a relative with or without *ἄν* indifferently.

As has been said above, when a relative without *ἄν* introduces the subjunctive, the tendency is toward a generic rather than a future meaning, in the proportion of 38 to 14. And if we exclude from the calculation the cases of *μέχρις οὗ*, *ὅφρα*, *ἔστω*, *ἔως*, and especially *πρίν*, which from their meaning are naturally inclined to refer to future time, the generic meaning preponderates over the future in the overwhelming proportion of 33 to 2. The result may be stated thus: In the tragedians relative pronouns and adverbs without *ἄν* often introduce the subjunctive mood, but almost invariably in general conditions, except in the case of adverbs meaning "until."

TABLE IV.

*Irregular Subjunctive Conditions introduced by*(a)  $\epsilon\iota$  without  $\tilde{\alpha}\nu$ .(b) a relative without  $\tilde{\alpha}\nu$ .

	General.	Particular.	Total.
Aeschylus (a) . . . . .	2	3	5
Aeschylus (b) . . . . .	6	1	7
Aeschylus (total) . . . . .	8	4	12
Sophocles (a) . . . . .	4	1	5
Sophocles (b) . . . . .	20	8	28
Sophocles (total) . . . . .	24	9	33
Euripides (a) . . . . .	0	2	2
Euripides (b) . . . . .	12	5	17
Euripides (total) . . . . .	12	7	19
Tragedians . . . . .	44	20	64

The cases are as follows: *General*, Aeschylus, (a) Sup. 86, Ag. 1282, (b) Sup. 114, Sept. 321, Ag. 735, Eum. 209, 330, 651. Sophocles, (a) O. T. 198, 874, Ant. 710, Ajax 521, (b) O. T. 316, 1231, Ant. 323, 619, 1025, Phil. 1361, Ajax 555, 761, 965, 1074, 1081, O. C. 395, 1225, El. 771, 1060, 1061, Trach. 149, 251, 946, 1009. Euripides, (a) none, (b) Al. 76, 978, Androm. 239, Hec. 253, El. 972, Hipp. 427, 527, I. T. 1064, Ion 856, Cyc. 526, Med. 516, Orest. 805. — *Particular*, Aeschylus, (a) Sup. 385, Per. 782, Eum. 232, (b) Sup. 800. Sophocles, (a) O. C. 1443, (b) Phil. 764, 917, 1077, Ajax 571, 1184, O. C. 79, El. 225, Trach. 609. Euripides, (a) I. A. 1240, Orest. 1534, (b) Al. 849, I. A. 540, Orest. 1218, 1357, 1359. Paley's text is followed in several cases in Aeschylus.

TABLE V.

*Relative Words without ἄν followed by the Subjunctive, in all the Tragedians.*

	Generic.	Particular.	Total.
ὅς . . . . .	11	1	12
ὅστις . . . . .	10	...	10
Other rel. pronouns . . . . .	2	1	3
πρίν . . . . .	3	7 <sup>1</sup>	10
ἕως . . . . .	2	2	4
ἕνθα . . . . .	2	...	2
ἐπεὶ . . . . .	2	...	2
ὅπου . . . . .	3	...	3
ἔστε . . . . .	...	1	1
ὅφρα . . . . .	...	1	1
ὁπόθι . . . . .	1	...	1
εἴτε . . . . .	1	...	1
ὅτε . . . . .	1	...	1
μέχρις οὗ . . . . .	...	1	1
Total . . . . .	38	14	52

#### 4. *Unreal Conditions.*

There are in the tragedians 153 cases of the form of condition commonly known as contrary to fact, or unreal. All but four of these present a possibility which is unmistakably unreal or impossible, while the four remaining contain conditions which, though possible in themselves, are yet plainly conceived by the speaker to be contrary to fact. In short, they are subjectively contrary to fact, so that the ordinary interpretation of this form of expression is fully sustained by tragic usage, in spite of recent efforts<sup>2</sup> to prove the contrary.

<sup>1</sup> Five of these are in Euripides.

<sup>2</sup> See Bayfield, on Conditional Sentences, *Classical Review*, May, 1890. For a full discussion of Bayfield's position, see the author's paper in the *Classical Review* for November, 1891.

5. *Miscellaneous.*

*a.* εἰ δὲ μή. This expression is used 19 times to express the alternative, without reference to the form of condition preceding. In all but three of these the protasis, if expressed in full, would be εἰ with the future indicative, or εἰάν with the subjunctive, as is shown by the form of the apodosis.

*b.* ἄν with a participle. This occurs six times, in every case standing for an optative, and never for a secondary term of the indicative. One of these is found in the Rhesus, (v. 90), and it is an interesting coincidence that the expanded clause here, and in fact the whole first half of the verse in which it stands, is identical with Hipp. 519, where the same usage is found in an unquestioned work of Euripides. Such an indication of authorship is, of course, of the slightest weight, but it may at least be said, in view of Euripides's habit of repeating himself in a happy turn of phrase, that it is more likely that he is doing so here than that any other poet is imitating him in so trifling a peculiarity.